

My dear Tom

Rome 23^d April 1873

You'll be looking for a scribble from me so as I have nothing ugly to tell you I think I can be pleasant in a chit chat with you tho I've nothing new & my news I am afraid is as old as myself, but we in our brotherly love are young

I have just had a nice letter (of the 18th) from Maria in which she gives me a good account of you at which I rejoice for as I have got about & as we are so much alike, so now you ought to get about - She tells me your weather is fine so I'll even hope that this may find you gadding with only one stick

We have had most lovely skies & I have been strolling almost every day, as usual I cat out to some nice place, enjoy the trees & flowers & then walk home, passing some 3 or 4 hours, but I confess I arrive "without a leg to stand upon", but as my good Doctor tells me that I should taste the fresh air every day so I make a daily effort & am really doing well & looking "lubbish"

You try to make me out younger than 80 but

my income
I am bustling by every means, & am much within
it to do, for Walter had to go to Shoreditch church
to get my register & found it 7th Dec^r 1893, he
so much admired the Church

My Philodramatic society are building a fine
Theatre in my fountain rooms, as this will be
permanent & as I am so fond of the Drama &
my rent is more than covered; I think you'll
consider ^{me} a lucky dog, for as my rent is doubled
owing to the great improvements what should I have
done? it is £170 & this society pay me £180
they have a long lease renewable, so I have
no more concern - There ^{are} 120 ^{Italian} members & they
subscribe 6 shilling a month each

As my "Cane" is very near done I am projecting
a new picture & hope I may "like" Hadyn who
did his finest things after he was 80!!!

It's so odd my having only to think of myself
& I don't seem to know myself, my good Doctor &
his Ladies do every ^{thing} so I have no thought but to
pay 4th 2^d a day for every thing & my good Betta
£10 a year - think of my ever arriving at such comfort
Now I shall look for a scribble - Your loving Joe

28.
Finding strength & mind to pursue my painting
gives me much enjoyment & prevents that
languishment which is the drawback of years

Making the Theatre in my house has driven me
away from the knocking upset me, so I have been
doing a picture at the house of a Roman Lady &
working every mor. it is done - a Poet's thinking
with pen in hand gave me the subject of expression
- I aimed at a powerful effect, my work is admired
& my fr. are astonished that I could finish such a
work with my hands so out of drawing, but yet I
come it well & my sight is excellent, more than
3 hours I cannot sit at ^{it} yet some 6 or 7 hours I am
able to paint during the day - I have no interruptions
which is a great matter & my fr. the Doctor & his
Ladies are a great comfort to me

I hope Mr. will find you walking & the day
warm & that you pick up & come & see me
Your loving brother

Joe